

Heating effectively and efficiently

Background

Canberra's climate requires that we heat and cool most of our buildings. The major demand is for heating as we have an extended and sometimes severe winter, however demand for cooling our workspaces has risen with a greater prevalence of office equipment such as computers, which increase the heat load of our workspace. In many cases this demand has been met through the installation of 'split system' or 'heat pump' systems that provide both heating and cooling. Whilst these systems have some advantages we must also ensure they are managed well or else they can lead to much higher energy costs, and thus greenhouse emissions.

Heating is provided through a range of different heating systems on campus that use either electricity or gas. The majority are centralized systems that will heat a whole building yet there are also local, individual heating systems installed in some areas.

Nearly all heating systems on campus provide the local user with the ability for some control of temperature through the use of a thermostat yet there are also a range of other actions that you can take to maintain your comfort. By adopting some of the following actions, you can help to ensure you are not only warm, but also that you make efficient use of heating, which not only helps you get through the day, but helps the environment as well.

Actions

- Wear appropriate clothing – shorts and a t-shirt are not really appropriate for winter.
- Keep window closed – if you open the window during the day to get some fresh air make sure you close it at night.
- Know your building's heating mechanisms – each building is different so make sure you know how to efficiently operating your heating system. This is particularly important with thermostats – some are fine for you to change whilst others should only be altered by Facilities and Services staff.
- Move your body (as suggested by OH&S) – regular stretching and movement help to maintain circulation and keep you warmer.
- Close your curtains – on some very cold and overcast days you will be getting no useful heat from the sun so you may as well close your curtains to try and keep the heat in. This is especially important if you sit close to a window, as even if the room temperature is warm, you will still feel cold sitting next to a window when it is cold outside.
- Don't place any objects, such as furniture, in front of your heating system. This will obstruct air flow and reduce the effectiveness of the system.
- Switch off heater at end of day.

Did you know?

The ANU uses over \$6 million of electricity and gas each year on campus. Not only is this costly, it makes up most of the greenhouse emissions that we are responsible for emitting each year. Of this energy use about a third is used to heat and cool our buildings.